



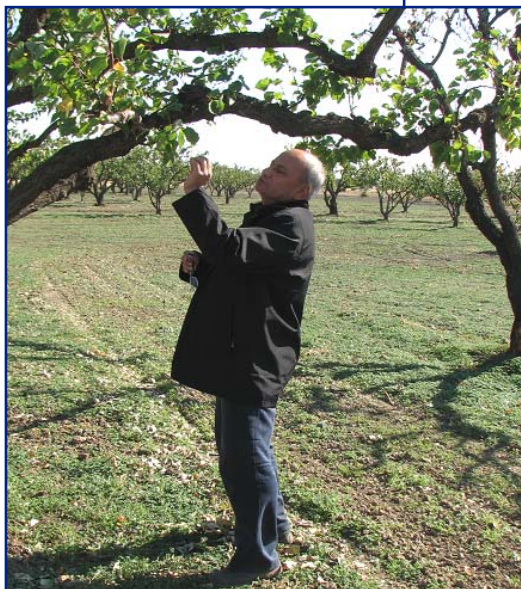
# USAID | TAJIKISTAN

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

## SUCCESS STORY

### California Techniques Boost Productivity

**Marketing specialist teaches US methods of fruit cultivation and processing.**



*Toshmatov inspects apricot tree in California, 2006. Photo: Community Connections*

***“The final goal of agriculture in Tajikistan today is not only to increase the volume of production, but also to sell at a good price.”***

***Bahodur Toshmatov,  
participant of the USAID  
Community Connections  
program***

Bahodur Toshmatov, biologist and business marketing expert, has a vision for the future of fruit production in northern Tajikistan: “The final goal of agriculture in Tajikistan today is not only to increase the volume of production, but also to sell at a good price”. Now, with support from the American people, Bahodur has the tools and expertise to help make his vision a reality for grape and apricot producers and sellers in the heavily agricultural Sugd region of Tajikistan.

In November 2006, Bahodur was among ten citizens of Tajikistan selected by the USAID Community Connections program in an open competition to visit California for three weeks of trainings, site visits, and networking with American fruit and vegetable producers. Since returning home, he has worked tirelessly to share what he learned with colleagues. His U.S. experience also reaped professional benefits: not long after the trip he was hired as Marketing Expert by ACTED, an international organization promoting agricultural development in Tajikistan.

With new ideas fresh in his mind, Bahodur set about conducting a wide range of trainings across his region in 2007, with the help of a grant from the U.S. Embassy in Dushanbe. During the course of 18 trainings, five workshops, and four practical exercises, he taught a range of new techniques he learned in California. These included tomato processing, grape growing and processing, orchard soil management, new methods of solar apricot drying, and orchard irrigation methods. Specialists, family farmers, and collective

farmers all have benefited from Bahodur’s training and advice. He has traveled to many of the agricultural districts in northern Tajikistan in 2007, with more planned for 2008.

In his new role as Marketing Expert at ACTED, Bahodur has identified profitable crops for cultivation and processing by eleven new producer cooperatives, among them apricots, peanuts, and tomatoes. On his recommendation, a new fruit solar dryer was designed, built, and tested. Plans are also underway for a more advanced and modern solar “air-tunnel” type drier, which can increase production capacity and improve the quality and safety of the final product.

Bahodur’s efforts have attracted the attention of dried fruit purchasers far and wide, not only in Tajikistan’s biggest cities, but also in Russia and Switzerland. In February 2007, the Swiss company “Claro” ordered 800 kg of dried apricots. “This is a great opportunity for Tajik farmers, and a break-through into the European market”, says Bahodur. He is grateful to USAID for giving him the opportunity to travel to the United States. Thanks to his initiative, many others will also benefit from Bahodur’s experiences.